181 spite of the strong feeling of identification with Islam, the looseness of the family ties, the absence of any clan ties among the sedentary population, and the tremendous amount of individual economic independence, are indicative of this trend of individualism in the Turkic sedentary society.

The traditional economic structure of the urban society, which is based on the small individual merchants, shopkeepers and artisans, is probably the main contributor to the individualistic nature which developed in this society.

Individualism in the Turkic society is not a conscious intellectual movement (although it is reflected in much of the Turkic literature), but is a product of spontaneous historical evolution of the
181 society. The establishment of a strong Communist regime with
668 its exceedingly numerous social controls on the life of the individ-
179 ual is an unnatural imposition on this society. The stress on conformity to set a pattern of thought and behavior, the encroachment on the individual liberties, and above all the destruction of the individual economic basis, will probably destroy much of the individualistic traditions of the Turkic society.

181 The situation differs in some respects in the nomadic tribal
184 society, where the individual depends so strongly on the society for his economic and cultural needs as well. Here the individual's freedom of action and expression is curtailed to fit the pressing needs of the society as a whole. The family and clan ties are much stronger and more important.

181 G. The Concept of Freedom

183 While the Chinese, living in the same environment as the Turks,
192 even lack a proper term for 'freedom', the Turks feel so strongly and emotional about 'freedom', that they have an abundant number of different words for it, just as the Mongols have hundreds of words for military and tactical matters.

Words for freedom are, besides istiklal (of Arabian origin and most used), hürrüyet (e.g. söz hürriyeti 'freedom of speech'), serbestlik (the Eastern Turks often refer to their struggle for freedom as to serbestlik harbi 'the war or campaign for independence'), muafiyet, azadelik, etc.

181 The concept of freedom goes back to the nomadic tribes of
183 Central Asia. The freedom enjoyed by the nomad is one of the most highly valued of his treasures. The sedentary Turks still look up to the nomads, whose way of life they have given up centuries ago. Their literary and cultural traditions have come down from their nomadic forefathers, and with them the concept of the unlimited freedom of the steppe people.

The traditional concept of freedom was not of Turkic origin alone; the Arabic influence on the Turkic civilization has left its
192 marks here also. The word that designates freedom in Turkish

181 is "istiklal" which is actually an Arabic loan word. Istiklal means
183 both freedom and independence. Along with the nomadic concep-
• [192] tion of the freedom of movement in the vast steppes, there is also a reflection of the concept of political independence and being one's own master. The 19th and 20th centuries brought additional associations to the word freedom. Along with the rise of nationalistic
181 aspirations, which resulted indirectly from the similar movements
183 in Europe, some Western ideas and notions have reached Turkes-
668 tan indirectly also. Though the Western full concept of freedom
177 and democracy is not comprehended among the majority of the people of Eastern Turkestan, it has added more depth and breadth to the concept of freedom. The awareness of the need for political freedom has grown in Sinkiang in the last century. Sinkiang's history in this period indicates the strong desires and wishes of its people to be free of Chinese rule, or any other foreign domination. The Turkic people strongly resent and resist the encroachment on their freedom of action and political decision. This feeling of resentment is not only experienced by the more sophisticated sedentary population, aspiring for political independence, but is also shared by the nomadic people. The Communists have made attempts to either encroach on their freedom of movement in their searches for pasture land, or have completely attempted to sedentarize them. Thus, not only the economic existence of the nomads is threatened, but the freedom characteristic of their way of life is in danger also. The Communists have not only arrested the political freedom of the Turks and their desires for independence, but have also touched on their traditional values associated with their nomadic past, and threatening the existence of the nomads today.

H. Attitude toward Change

177 There are elements of both resistance and of desire for change
178 among the Eastern Turkis. The dominating social and economic
565 classes - consisting of the wealthy merchants (the Türks call them 'pek mühim ve zengin tüccar', verbatim: "the very important and rich merchants'), landowners (Türk: Emlak sahibi), and clergy (Türk: Rahibler) - opposed change which threatened to undermine their social and material status. The general population aspired to raise their social position and standards of living, but at the same time did not wish to lose their leaders to whom they have always looked for direction and guidance. There is no question that no section of the society aspired to a forced, radical type of change for which they were not prepared. This type of change in the social structure, the complete leveling off of the social classes, with only the party hierarchy in a superior position, which was forced down on the population by the Communists, is an artificial product for which the Turkic society was not ready, nor willing to inflict upon itself.